LAFITTE of LOUISIANA

BY MARY DEVEREUX

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY DON C. WILSON

CHAPTER V.

It was the afternoon of the fourth day when Jean, fearing lest Laro might come to seek him, and thinking that perhaps Greloire also would be coming, decided to go to Le Chien Heureux, Pierre having already gone out to see some of his military friends.

The air was crisp, and Jean, walking rapidly, was turning the corner of the street leading down to the inn, when he saw Laro approaching.

"Ha, runaway!" the latter called out, a smile lighting his dark face. "I was but just coming to see you. I put to sea this night."

Jean started and stared.

"Aye; this very night with the 'Aigle' set sail for Louisiana," continued Laro. "Would you not like to go with me—you and Pierre? I will take both, if you but say the word."

Jean's cheeks were filled with sudden color, and his eyes sparkled with excitement. But this all passed away as he said sighingly, "Aye, I would like to go; but—"

"Then it is but for you to come," urged the tempter.

Jean paid no heed to this, but inquired, "Why are you going in such haste?"

"Well," replied Laro, lowering his tone. "There is in the city a certain wealthy royalist who has fled from Paris with his daughter Roselle, a most beautiful demoiselle of eighteen. He and a few others have made it worth my while to carry them to Louisiana, where they will seek new homes.

"Come, lad," he added coaxingly; "make a run of it, and come with me over seas. Come with me, I say, and you'll reap more gold in shorter time than did ever an aristocrat of France."

"Not on this trip, Laro," replied Jean, calmly, but with unmistakable firmness. "You have said you would be coming and going; so some day I will turn my back upon France and go with you."

"I will give you this ring of mine."

"Well, well; be it so, then," said Laro, although with evident reluctance. "But you'll not speak to any one of our sailing to-night?"

"Nay—not I. Why should I?" asked Jean, as he opened the door. "I'll see you again before sailing-time."

Jean walked slowly along the streets, seeing nothing for a time. He was going toward home, and had almost reached the narrow street upon which stood Margot's cottage, when he saw approaching that which sent his dreams flying, and with them all thoughts of Laro and Louisiana.

It was Greloire, who appeared to have seen him at the same moment; for he paused, as if waiting for the boy to come near.

"Tell me—have you seen him? What said he?" Jean demanded, before they had gone half a dozen steps.

"Never mind whether or not I have seen him," replied Greloire, rather slowly. "Let it suffice that he knows of my having met with you, and of your anxiety to see him. But he bids you, with his love, to stop at home for the present. Wait quietly here, as he asks of you, and you will be sure to see him in a short time."

"See him—here!" exclaimed the boy. "How can that be?"

"I cannot tell you that; only wait, and you shall see. He was not pleased that I ever thought to encourage your leaving the city; and so you must promise not to attempt it."

A rebellious light shone for a moment in the dark eyes turned to meet the soldier's stern look. Then it was gone, and Jean answered with a deep sigh, "Yes; I will do as he wishes."

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It lacked but a few minutes of eight o'clock, and the neighborhood of Le Chien Heureux was unwontedly quiet. Inside, however, there was the usual gathering of soldiers and citizens.

Laro was not in the room with the other customers; and Jean, upon inquiring for him, was told in a low tone by Thiel that the captain was in his own apartment.

He then invited Jean to follow him, and, after bidding Pierre wait where he was, and to open the door to no one, he led the way to the passage.

Dropping on his knees, he grasped a ring, and a square of the apparently solid wall rolled up with a grating noise until it was level with his head, as he still knelt; and a rush of damp air, as if from out of doors, stirred the short locks on Jean's forehead, as he stared with wonder-filled eyes into the dark opening that gaped before them.

A minute later the boy's eyes were nearly blinded, as he followed his companion into a cave-like room, with a floor of rock, which was also the material of its ceiling and walls. It was furnished but scantily; and around a table at the farther side were several men, while somewhat apart from them sat two women.

As Thiel entered, with Jean close behind him, the men ceased talking, and stared with evident displeasure at the boy—all except Laro, who called out, "Aha, my young mate, is it thyself? Welcome, my sea-gull!"

He put out an inviting hand; then, as the lad came to his side, he said, turning to a slenderly built man of middle age seated next him, with an elbow on the table and a hand supporting his cheek, "Count de Cazeneau, permit me to present to you my young friend, Jean Lafitte, who is some day to be my mate, and who is as dear to me as an own son."

The count did not change his position, but stared moodily at the handsome boy while murmuring a courteous acknowledgment of his presence. As for Jean, he scarcely heard the words, so engrossed had his senses become with the beautiful face confronting him from the other corner of the room.

The young lady was looking at him; and from her clear blue eyes there flashed a smile that opened the red lips to show two rows of little pearl-like teeth, as she said in a voice whose sweetness held yet a note of command, "Come over here, pretty boy, and talk to me. I was feeling lonesome in this dreadful place, and if the sight of you is so pleasant, what may not your words do to cheer me?" And she smiled again.

He knew her to be the count's daughter, of whom Laro had spoken; and he felt a still more poignant regret that he was not to sail in the "Aigle" that night.

"Have you been long in Toulon?" Jean inquired, somewhat at a loss what to say, and yet longing to manifest his sympathy for so lovely a being.

"Since last summer," she answered; and bent toward him as from a sudden impulse while she said, "Did you ever meet people who were strangers to you, and yet who from the moment you looked into their faces seemed otherwise?"

She had laid a hand upon his shoulder, and a puzzled expression showed in his face as he looked into her earnest eyes. But this gave way to a half-mischievous but wholly winning smile as he replied, with a gallantry hardly to have been expected in a lad of his age, "Never—until this moment."

She laughed, and drew her hand away, the wild-rose color deepening in her cheeks

The smile was gone as she said, speaking in so low a tone that he scarcely caught her words, "Is he related to you—this Laro?"

"Oh, no, ma'm'selle," he whispered; "I have known him only a few weeks."

"And do you like him?"

She—perhaps unconsciously—raised her voice a little; and the gravity of its tone, coupled with that which showed in her face, caused Jean to stare at her with surprise.

She leaned forward until her face was close to his own.

"Jean Lafitte," she said slowly and distinctly. "I never had a brother; but if I could have one, I would wish him to be like you. I should not like it that you grew to be a man such as I feel this Laro must be."

Again Jean was slow in thinking what to say; and all he did was to look into her lovely face—into the lustrous eyes fixed so intensely upon him.

"You may forget me, Jean," she resumed, as he did not speak; but I shall hope not. Yet, for fear I may slip from your memory, I will give you this ring of mine;" and she drew one from her finger. "I wish you to wear it, and to think it says always, 'Roselle de Cazeneau gave me to you; and she will always pray for you—that you may be a gallant gentleman, loyal to what is true and right.' Will you have the ring say this to you?"

Her words touched deeply the boy's chivalric, impulsive nature; and bending over the hand that proffered the ring, he pressed his lips to the jeweled fingers.

"Thank you," he said, as, now with a smile, she slipped the little circlet upon the fourth finger of his left hand; and the touch of her own, warm and gentle, sent a thrill of delight through his young veins.

"I shall never forget you," he declared, looking up into her face; "and no matter what or where I may be, you and yours will always have my love and service."

"It is now my turn to thank you," she said; "for"—and a far-seeing look chased the smile from her eyes—"who shall say but that I or mine may call upon you to make good your promise?"

Before he could reply, they were interrupted by the entrance of Laro, with Thiel close behind him; and following the two was Pierre, who with open eyes and mouth stared about him wonderingly.

Laro gave his orders hastily, but clearly, after which he turned to Pierre, who stood near him.

"Good night, my boy; I am sorry you are not to go with me, for I would like greatly to have your stout heart and strong arm aboard the 'Aigle.' You will come with me next time?" laying his hand on the boy's shoulder.

Jean remained silent, standing with lowered eyes, while the bell jangled a second time.

"I'll be in this port again within two years," added Laro, "and then I am sure you will be ready to come with me. Until then, dear lad, good night." And he moved away, motioning for the others to follow.

"Good night, Jean, and adieu," said Roselle, as she was about to pass him. "Do not forget me, nor what I have said to you."

She was gone, leaving the boy standing mute, sensible of the odor of violets, and regretting ruefully his inability to have acknowledged her gracious farewell. But the sound of Thiel's voice soon aroused him from his self-reproachings.

"Come," the landlord said sharply—"come with me."

The hooks of a rope ladder were soon fastened into two iron rings bolted to the rock. A coil of rope was then put through the opening, and lowered carefully, until Laro, who kept a hand upon it, felt it grow taut with a pull from below.

"Good night again, boy; my heart is sorry to leave thee behind," he said to Jean, who was close to him. "Good-by, again, and good luck!"

He had, while speaking, stepped through the opening, and, as the farewell came from his lips—disappeared down the ladder.

Ropes were fastened under the arms of the young girl and of her maid. One of the count's friends followed Laro; then the maid after him; next the count himself, and then his daughter, the two remaining gentlemen going last of all.

There was no sign of fighting when Jean and Pierre left Le Chien Heureux that night:; and the sough of the rising wind was all that broke the silence.

"Next time I will surely go," Jean said to himself, as he and Pierre, after putting out the light which Margot had left for them, took off their shoes and crept softly upstairs to their respective bedrooms. "Laro said he would return within two years; and in two years I shall be larger, and she will not call me a boy. I will go, and I will find her."

(To be continued.)

An Insult to the Cook.

"We had just engaged a new cook," said the young matron. "I was going out, and as lots of little things were lying around in my room, I locked the door. Imagine my surprise when I returned to be greeted in the hall by a veritable fury impersonated by this same newly-arrived cook. She hurled all manner of violent language at me, and, surprised as I was, and incoherent as she was, I managed to make out that she had been accused of being a thief.

"Why she felt so bad about it was the puzzle. 'Why do you lock your door?' she howled. Of course, that explained it all, and so, very gently, I asked her how she had known it was locked. She was only silent a moment in order to think up an answer. 'I wanted a needle, and so I went up—' she was saying, when I interrupted with: 'But that was quite wrong.' I was just about to send in an alarm when my husband came home. He did the rest. We dined out."—Philadelphia Record.

Respect for Age in Japan.

In Japan there is no such thing as disrespect from youth to age. No Japanese boy or girl could ever think in a light or disrespectful manner of his or her superiors or teachers; and this may account for the earnestness so unusual among young children. When a student enters a master's presence in Japan he bows to the floor, and when the lesson is finished he bows again, with expressions of the deepest gratitude, as he takes his departure. The teacher, sitting in most cases upon his feet on the flor, gravely returns each salutation, then lights his little pipe and waits for his next class. There is no hurrying of masters from room to room, as in some of the schools in our enlightened land

Boys and Girls

King of the World.

In the acorn is wrapped the forest,
In the little brook, the sea;
The twig that will sway with the sparrow to-day
Is to-morrow's sturdy tree.
There is hope in a mother's joy,
Like a peach in its blossom furled,
And a noble boy, a gentle boy,
A manly boy is king of the world.

The power that will never fail us
Is the soul of simple truth;
The oak that defies the stormiest skies
Was upright in its youth.
The beauty no time can destroy
In the pure young heart is furled;
And a worthy boy, a tender boy,
A faithful boy is king of the world.

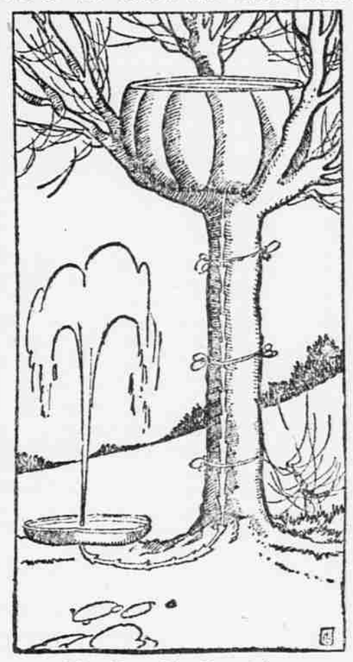
The cub of the royal lion
Is regal in his play;
The eaglet's pride is as fiery-eyed
As the old bird's, bald and grey.
The nerve that heroes employ
In the child's young arm is furled;
And a gallant boy, a truthful boy,
A brave, pure boy is king of the world.
—London Answers.

A Pumpkin Fountain.

The pumpkin season is here, and all the country boys and some of the girls are making jack o' lanterns and those terrible pumpkin-stalk whistles that make a noise like the "honk" of an automobile horn, only worse.

Here is another way of extracting amusement out of a pumpkin vine, but without scaring people or setting their nerves on edge:

Having procured a big round pumpkin or squash, cut it in two horizontally, a little above the middle, and scoop out the pulp and seeds. In this way you make a large bowl out of the lower part of the pumpkin and a large saucer out of the upper part. The "eye" of the pumpkin, that is, the depression opposite the stalk, is in the center of the bottom of the bowl. At this point bore a hole and fit to it one of the hollow leaf stalks which



The Pumpkin Fountain.

you must insert from above, small end first, and pull through, until the joint is tight.

Now put your pumpkin bowl in the fork of a tree six or eight feet from the ground, and fasten it securely. Slip the large end of another leaf stalk over the small end of the stalk you have attached to the bowl, the large end of a third stalk over the small end of the second, and so on until you have made a tube long enough to reach the ground and run over the ground some distance like a growing pumpkin vine. You may make most of the tube out of the main stalk of the pumpkin vine instead of leaf stalks, and by using a number of vines you can make the tube as long as you please.

The end of the tube should be a leaf stalk. Turn this upward and fit it to a hole in the top of the pumpkin, the "saucer." Fasten the tube to the ground with pegs, cover it with earth or leaves if you want to make the thing look more mysterious, fill the pumpkin bowl with water and summon your friends to see the pumpkin fountain play.

The jet will not rise as high as the level of the water in the bowl because of the friction of the long tube and of the air, but it will rise a good deal more than half as high and fall back in drops into the saucer, making a very pretty little fountain.

The tip of the tube should rise an inch or two above the saucer, and if the bore of the tip is not very fine it should be plugged with a bit of cork, wood or pumpkin in which a small hole has been bored. A fine jet is prettier than a large one, and it does not need so much water.

"Rooster and Hens."

As many girls and boys as wish catch hold of each other's coat tails and skirts. The foremost one is the rooster and the rest are hens. One player stands about fifteen feet away and makes motions with his leg like a rooster scratching. The one who is playing rooster says:

"What are you doing, strange creature?"

"Scratching a hole," replies the strange creature.

"What will you do with the hole?"

"Find a stone in it."

"What will you do with the stone?"

"Sharpen a knife with it."

"What will you do with the knife?"

"Slaughter a hen," shouts the "strange creature," and makes a dash at the rooster and hens. Now all the "hens" must try to escape, but they must not let go of the rooster or of each other. The consequence is that there is great opportunity for agility and cleverness in dodging, and the game is full of fun. Of course, the "strange creature" can catch hen after hen in the end. When none is left the rooster selects a new rooster and becomes the "strange creature" himself.

Little Bravo.

Years ago some Indians lived on the banks of a beautiful river. The men fished and the women planted corn in little hillocks instead of in rows. When they sat down for a friendly gossip they held their little babies in their arms or strapped upon their backs. One young mother never took her eyes from the cradle in which her handsome boy slept. When he wakened, she sang to him and called him "Little Bravo," with such love and tenderness in her voice that the other women all stopped to listen.

Years passed merrily until Little Bravo was ten years old. He could hunt and fish, and his mother was happy dreaming of the time when he should be a young man. All her spare moments were spent in embroidering clothes for Little Bravo and his father, with the result that they outshone all others of their tribe. Little Bravo always wore moccasins of yellow buckskin trimed with beads and porcupine quills. He was a noble, warm-hearted and sunny-tempered lad. The Great Spirit, however, saw that the foolish, doting love of his parents was ruining the gift he had given him.

One summer night the heat hung heavy over the land.

"There will be a storm," said the father. "Where is Little Bravo?"

"Down on the river bank asleep," replied the mother. "I sat by him a long time brushing away the insects that bothered him. He had taken off his moccasins and his feet were bare. He is very beautiful, our Little Bravo. I will carry him in when the storm comes without awakening him."

The storm soon broke with great violence. The mother hastened to the river and just as she was about to lift her boy a vivid flash of lightning revealed the two hands of the spirit who lives in the water. They reached up and drew Little Bravo into the waves. All the mother saw was the print of his body on the shore and his two yellow moccasins. A scream brought the father to the spot. They both dived into the water, though the storm raged. What cared they for that? Their Little Bravo had disappeared beneath the surface. Finally, in heart-broken accents they pleaded: "Oh, spirit of the river! Give him back to us!"

By and by the father arose, and, looking into the sky, said: "It is the will of the Great Spirit. He has taken him away, but will save him for us." Turning, he disappeared into the forest. The mother sat by the river for many days, without food or sleep, kissing and caressing the little yellow moccasins.

One night, on raising her eyes to the sky, she beheld the pathway made of star dust which leads to the spirit land. Longing to follow it, she felt the pressure of a small hand upon her shoulder. Turning, she met the smiling gaze of her son.

"Oh, Great Spirit, I thank thee! The dead is alive!"

"Come, mother," said the boy. "We are to follow yonder path to-night. I have come for thee, because thy weeping grieves the happy ones."

The mother placed her hand in the small clasp, but said:

"Here are thy moccasins. Thou wilt need them, the way may be rough."

The boy laughed, and held up his foot, upon which flashed and gleamed moccasins of shining gold. "Lay down my old moccasins," he said, "and thou shalt see how a mother's love shall be remembered."

She placed the little yellow moccasins on the ground, and a plant immediately sprang up. It grew rapidly, and on the highest branch the moccasins were fastened. They shrank in size and changed into flowers, keeping their original shape and color. Little Bravo said, "See, mother, these flowers shall bloom on forever by this shining river. Long after the red man has gone they shall bloom."

Wondering, but happy, the mother followed Little Bravo along the star-strewn path to spirit land. Not many moons later, from the midst of battle, the father joined them.

All this was long ago. The Indians have left the banks of that river, but the yellow flowers bloom on by its waters. The white children gather and call them "orchids" or "lady's slippers," but the Indians always give them their real name of "Indian moccasins."

Toboggan Travels Fast.

There is a spot in the Swiss Alps where a sled or a toboggan runs a mile in seventy seconds. The winter sportsmen of Europe take great pleasure in the Cresta run, as it is called, at St. Moritz. The toboggan season there begins about the middle of November and the slide is made smooth and safe by a committee appointed for that purpose. The Swiss toboggans are raised on runners shod with iron or steel. The rider lies flat upon the toboggan, head first, both hands grasping the framework at the sides, steering with both feet, just as boys do on sleds in this country. Iron spikes are fastened to the toes of the boots, and by trailing one foot or the other along the ground the big sled is guided.

Pindertoy.

Scissors and a pin only needed. This Fancy Dancer, if cut out and fastened together with a pin, will make a very attractive toy. If you push the pin firmly into the cork or the end of a

stick, and paste the pieces on an old visiting card before the pieces are cut out, this Pindertoy will last longer.

Take Care.

Take Care is a game played by any number of persons in several ways. In one of the most common, flour is packed tightly into a bowl, which is then turned over and removed, leaving the flour in a mound. On top of this is placed a small coin. The players in turn then remove each a part of the flour with a knife, and whoever lets the coin fall must pick it from the flour with his teeth. Sometimes each one says "take care" as he cuts off his portion of the flour, and the game thus receives its name.

There are many substitutes for the flour and coin. One of the best is a cardhouse of two cards on a pile made of the rest of the pack loosely thrown together. Each player removes one card, and he who allows the cardhouse to fall must pay a forfeit. The game may be played out of doors with a little flag stuck in a pail of sand, from which each player removes a little on the end of a stick.

Route of the Bobolink.

The amount of traveling done by some of our birds is astonishing. Dr. Cook says that the common nighthawk spends the summer in Alaska and the winter in Pategonia.

The bobolink, which is the reed bird of the middle states and the rice bird in the South, winters on the waving pampas of southern Brazil. It covers 700 miles from Cuba to the South American coast in a single flight, following a track not popular with other birds, which might be called the bobolink route.—Saturday Evening Post.

A CHILDREN'S REGATTA.

At Ryde, Isle of Wight, a children's regatta was held recently on a boating lake only 24 inches deep. The illustration is from a snap shot of the Boys' Tub Race, taken with a pocket kodak.